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Method for preparing 6-chloro-N-methyl-2,3,4,5-tetrahydro-1H-3-benzazepine.

A novel process for preparing 6-chloro-N-methyl-2,3,4,5-tetrahydro-1H-3-benzazepine comprising cyclizing N-methyl-N-[2-(2'-chlorophenyl) ethyl]-2-chloroethylamine hydrochloride in a solution of trichlorobenzene and aluminum chloride.

1 METHOD FOR PREPARING 6-CHLORO-N-METHYL-
 2,3,4,5-TETRAHYDRO-1H-3-BENZAZEPINE

 This invention relates to a novel process for pre-
5 paring 6-chloro-N-methyl-2,3,4,5-tetrahydro-1H-3-benzazepine.
 This compound has been disclosed as having utility as an
 alpha₂ antagonist, a pharmacological action which is
 associated with a broad spectrum of beneficial cardiovascular
 activity. The compound is particularly useful as an anti-
10 hypertensive agent. (United States Patent No. 4,465,677)

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

 In the above noted patent the title compound is
15 prepared by cyclizing N-methyl-N-[2-(2'-chlorophenyl)-
 ethyl]-2-chloroethylamine hydrochloride under Friedel-Crafts
 conditions. The cyclization step is carried out using Lewis
 acids such as aluminum chloride in a melt of ammonium chloride.
 United States Patents 4,251,660 and 4,200,754
20 disclose a method of preparing tetrahydroisoquinolines. Both
 of these patents employ aluminum chloride as the cyclization
 agent. The '660 patent teaches that the reaction is done in
 the absence of an organic solvent. The '754 patent discloses
 that the reaction is done with conventional Friedel Crafts
25 solvents, i.e., methylene chloride, tetrachloroethylene or
 dichloroethane. Other well known solvents employed during the
 Friedel Crafts reaction are nitrobenzene or decalin.

 The above methods which employ either the con-
 ventional solvents or a melt in the process all proved
30 commercially unsatisfactory when used in an attempt to prepare
 6-chloro-N-methyl-2,3,4,5-tetrahydro-1H-3-benzazepine. These
 prior art methods resulted in very poor yields, from
 relatively no yield to about 25%, with the production of
 undesired isomers and other impurities.

35 In addition to the above conventional Friedel-Crafts
 solvents, chlorinated organic solvents such as monochloro and

- 1 conditions such as temperature, pressure, and concentration of
aluminum chloride. The application of pressure permits a
higher concentration of aluminum chloride thereby decreasing
reaction time considerably, more than four fold.
- 5 Advantageously, the pressure is greater than two atmospheres.
The free base obtained from the hydrochloride salt after
treatment with aqueous alkali is purified by distillation
followed by conversion to the hydrochloride and recrystal-
lization from methanol-ethyl acetate.
- 10 The reaction mixture is conveniently and optionally
worked up by methods known to the art. Most commonly this
involves quenching the reaction mixture, removal of the
aluminum salts followed by extraction and purification of the
final product.
- 15 The method of this invention is successfully carried
out employing the isomers of trichlorobenzene, for example, the
reaction progresses as expected if the 1,2,4; 1,2,3; or 1,3,5
isomer of trichlorobenzene or mixtures of them is used as the
solvent. Advantageously, technical grade 1,2,4 isomer is
20 employed because it has the lowest melting point (17° C.) and
thus the greatest liquid working range.
- The cyclization agent is aluminum chloride which forms
a Friedel-Crafts complex which in turn cyclizes to form the
desired product. Stoichiometric quantities of aluminum
25 chloride may be used. In practice from about 2.4 to 3 mole
equivalents of aluminum chloride compared to the starting
material (Formula I) are employed. Excess amounts of aluminum
chloride are not detrimental to the reaction.
- The following example illustrates the process of this
30 invention but is not to be construed as a limitation thereof.

EXAMPLE

- A mixture of 121.1 g of 1,2,4-trichlorobenzene and 19.5
Kg. (75.0 m) of N-methyl-N-[2-(2'-chlorophenyl)ethyl]-2-hydroxy-
35 ethylamine was agitated at a temperature of 20-30° C. and a
homogenous solution was obtained. Phosphorous pentachloride,
7.2 Kg. (34.6 m) was added and the temperature was brought to

1 110° C.

To the above solution, containing N-methyl-N-[2-(2'-chlorophenyl)ethyl]-2-chloroethylamine hydrochloride, was slowly added 24.4 Kg. (18.3 m) of aluminum chloride while the temperature was maintained between 95° and 110° C. The reaction was then brought to a reflux temperature of 205° C. for six hours.

The reaction was quenched over a 2 hour period by cooling to 80° C. with an acidic aqueous mixture (450 l of H₂O, 18 l of HCl) with agitation. The quench was allowed to settle and the trichlorobenzene layer was separated.

The aqueous quench was layered with toluene (120 l) and the two phase mixture was brought to a pH of at least 11 with 50% aqueous sodium hydroxide.

15 The aqueous phase was extracted with toluene (120 ml) and the phases separated. The aqueous wash was discarded and the toluene phase was fractionally distilled. After removal of the toluene, the distillate at 134° to 143° C. pot temperature and 126° to 140° C. vapor temperature at 15 to 20 torr was collected and resulted in a 91% yield of 6-chloro-3-methyl-2,3,4,5-tetrahydro-1H-3-benzazepine as the free base.

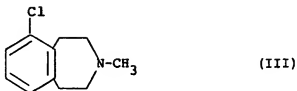
The above oily base in toluene was treated with anhydrous hydrogen chloride, then recrystallized from methanol/ethyl acetate yielded 6-chloro-3-methyl-2,3,4,5-tetrahydro-1H-3-benzazepine hydrochloride, m.p. 268-270° C (d).

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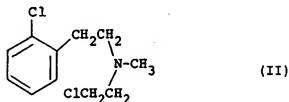
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Claims.

1. A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula (III)



which comprises cyclisation of a compound of formula (II)



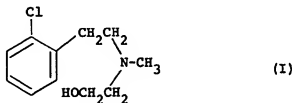
in the presence of aluminium trichloride, characterised in that the solvent comprises trichlorobenzene.

2. A process as claimed in claim 1 in which the solvent is 1,2,4-trichlorobenzene.

3. A process as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 in which the reaction is carried out at a temperature of from about 180°C to about 215°C for a period of from about 3 to 8 hours.

4. A process as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3 in which the compound of formula (II) is prepared by reaction of a compound of formula (I)

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with phosphorous pentachloride in trichlorobenzene.